BRENNEN MG POLICY OUTLINED

Thomas F. Dunn Tells People MG Will Advise, Aid, Guide New State; Germans Responsible for Solving Problems, Establishing Democracy

Speaking to the people of Bremen who soon will have an opportunity to adopt a constitution and elect government representatives, Mr. Thomas F. Dunn, Director of Military Government for Bremen, outlined in a radio talk 22 April 1947 the problems for which the German people are responsible and the duties retained by Military Government. The text of his address follows.

You have been told many times, first by General Eisenhower and later by Generals McNarney and Clay, that the US occupation of your land is temporary—that we do not wish to stay any longer than is necessary for your democratic elements to demonstrate that they are capable of controlling your government and forcing it to do your bidding. The work of Military Government will be finished when you prove that you will make it impossible ever again for one man or one group of men to use the rich resources of Germany's manpower and material wealth for the destruction and the subjugation of your neighbors...

The pattern for the occupation has been laid down in general terms many times and you have seen it being carried out day by day through the twenty-three months that have elapsed since the capitulation in Rheims. Control of more and more of your own affairs has been returned to you. Military Government is withdrawing progressively from the operation of your affairs. More and more responsibility for your own destiny is being laid on your shoulders and more to come. Many of these responsibilities you have accepted and discharged well. Let it be understood that the ultimate solutions of your problems lie with you no matter how much help, or guidance we may give you, and both we are giving freely. Let no one think that our occupation was intended to find the answers for the problems created for you by the Nazi reign of twelve years. We are here to aid you but the answers will be yours within the outline of democracy that we have set up for you to follow.

Many controls have not been turned back to you and some will not be for a long time to come. How many and how swiftly they are relinquished by us will depend upon how well you handle those that have been given to you—how firmly you as people hold them and use them to see that your government serves humanity's interests and yours.

New Freedom

The people of Bremen face a new period of freedom, one already enjoyed in the other three Landes. Soon you will have an opportunity to adopt a constitution—a set of rules to govern your government and legislation. Then you will elect men of your own choosing to enforce these rules. Soon the task of completing the denazification which we have started will become yours also. These perhaps are the most important controls that will be entrusted to you in the near future.

So there may be no confusion in your minds as you come to contemplate the responsibilities that are in sight, I wish to review the situation as it stands today as to what responsibilities are German and which are retained by Military Government. Those that are yours have been delegated to your elected representatives and are discharged through normal German agencies which they have under their control. The controls retained by Military Government are exercised through these same officials and agencies. In the main, Military Government's controls are in the form of policy directives as, for instance, those pertaining to the distribution of coal. The present orders from Military Government are that coal will be supplied to essential services only. The actual allocation within these services is purely a German governmental matter. The transportation, the guarding, and the distribution of coal is completely in the hands of your own people.

In general the whole field of economics has been turned back to German control. Through German channels Land Bremen bids for its share of what is available on a bizonal level, arranges for its own transport and makes its own distribution. Even on the question of production Military Government has retained only policy control. What happens to German products made from German raw material after they have left the factories is purely your affair. If they find their way into the black market you should ask yourselves, not Military Government, why this is so.

German Obligation

With the establishment of the German Executive Committees for Economics, Food and Agriculture, Communication, and Transport and the German Joint Committees for Finance and Civil Services, responsibility for the solution of the day-to-day problems in these fields has been placed upon the Germans.

When difficulties arise they should be placed before the appropriate German authorities for solution and not referred to Military Government. For example, if an allocation of potatoes is not delivered as scheduled, the Minister of Food and Agriculture of the recipient Land should take the matter up directly with his colleagues in the Land from which the shipment was 'have been made. If satisfaction can't be obtained, the matter should be discussed between the respective Ministers President, and if a solution is still not found, the problem should be laid before the German Executive Committee for Food and Agriculture at Stuttgart. Only in the event that all of these steps prove unsuccessful should the matter then be referred to Land Military Governments for assistance.
Similarly, if questions arise regarding the supply of materials or power, the Land Minister of Economics concerned should attempt to find a solution, referring the matter to the respective Ministers President if appropriate, and finally laying the problem before the German Executive Committee for Economics at Minden.

The same principles will obtain for the solution of everyday problems in the other bizonal fields. In all cases the Land Minister of that field should first attempt to find the solution and then, if unsuccessful, lay the problem before the appropriate German bizonal committee.

In the field of Public Safety, large responsibilities rest with the German police force. It is responsible for your safety, for public order, and for enforcing German laws. If law enforcement does not satisfy you, complain to your elected representatives. They have the power to initiate remedies.

The control of wages, hours, and working conditions, the formation of workers councils, trade unions, and certain employers’ organizations, and the operation of labor courts for conciliation and arbitration machinery lies entirely in German hands. Even the wages of Germans employed by Military Government are fixed not by Military Government but by the Arbeitsamt. It is German law under which workers must register which governs their placement and transfers, and it is the German Police and the German courts which enforce these laws. Military Government retains the right to have available the labor the occupation forces require and to see that Military Government policies are carried out.

Religious and Cultural Affairs are entirely in German hands under Military Government supervision. The operations of local government are almost entirely in German hands as well. Military Government suggests, advises, and consults by means of conferences with the Bürgermeister and other local officials, but unless a matter of MG policy is involved, it does not tell the Germans to do one thing rather than another. It is true that certain principles have been established by Military Government regarding the drawing up of local constitutions, such as the inclusion of guarantees of individual right, but no attempt is made to dictate specific provisions of the constitution.

Exceptions Noted

Politically you are entirely free except that Nazism, nationalism, and militarism will not be allowed to obtain a hold upon your government. Military Government is here to protect you from these dangers. Otherwise you are free to form any political parties you wish, hold any political meetings you wish, take any political stand that you wish, providing it is not inimicable to the general pattern for democracy laid down by Military Government and you may elect to public office anyone you desire under your own rules so long as he is not a Nazi. With the establishment of the new Land Government which will be of your own choosing you may dictate to it any legislation you feel will benefit you.

In the field of Public Health and Welfare, Military Government’s primary responsibility is to restore German agencies concerned with the care of the indigent. The operation of these services is entirely a German matter. Military Government is giving to this program in many ways, as for instance, the distribution of penicillin and insulin for treatment of Germans.

In the field of Law, Military Government is concerned only with relationships involving the occupying powers and the Germans. Disputes among Germans are to be settled in German courts. Problems such as probate of estates, marriages, divorces, guardianships, trustees, transfer of real property, etc., are matters entirely within German jurisdiction. MG courts are concerned only with crimes committed against MG laws. In other words, the handling of normal legal matters pertaining to the life of the people has been returned completely to German control.

The imposition and collection of taxes also are German matters. Since November 1946, responsibility for the control of property seized from the Nazis has been the duty of the Finance President. Even the seizure of Nazi-owned property is a responsibility of the Amt für Vermögenskontrolle which is under his jurisdiction; the implementation of MG Laws 8, 52, and 53 has been given to this agency.

Among the controls which have not been turned over to the German people are those pertaining to education, publishing, press, radio, theater, and the entertainment field in general. The opportunity for propaganda by the Nazis through these media is too great in your midst but even in this field steps have been taken towards self-determination. Your newspaper is not subject to censorship, its editors are free to discuss any subject they wish and to give you any information you wish. Military Government reserves the right to insist that your press be accurate and not used for propaganda purposes.

Recapitulation

To recapitulate, Military Government’s principal mission now is to advise, aid, and guide you in establishing a democracy within your Land. Generally speaking, control of your own affairs has in a large measure been returned to you. Military Government stands ready to recall it if it is used in an undemocratic manner. But that will not happen if you observe the guiding principle of democracy: that government and the state exist only to serve the people—and all of the people—not just one small and select group.

The suffering that has followed the war is a price which the German people have had to pay to regain control of their own affairs. Take care that you don’t lose it again. Keep yourselves informed. See that your newspapers give you the information you require. Then use this knowledge to impose your will upon your government. Don’t permit yourselves to become its servants. Make it serve you.

Uniforms Restricted

Effective 1 June 1947, the sale of outer uniform clothing as prescribed for civilian wear will be discontinued, according to EUCOM circular No. 15 of 7 April 1947. The civilian uniform will not be required for wear after 1 June 1947.